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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of television commercials for toys and cereals on young children. Forty-four children, ranging in age from 4 to 7 years, were interviewed regarding their television viewing habits, their attitudes toward television commercials, their demands for their mothers to buy cereals and toys, and their interpretation of the reality of commercials. The mothers of these children completed a questionnaire about their children's television viewing habits, their own attitudes toward commercials, and their reactions to their children's demands for advertised products. The data were analyzed by computing percentages and the results revealed several trends. The more television the children watched, the more they demanded advertised products. Most of the time, mothers did not yield completely to their children's demands for advertised products. Children were able to name their specific preferences and dislikes for television commercials and they tended to prefer commercials which were related to their interests. Parental discussion on the content and selling techniques of television advertisements reduced the extent of children's demands for advertised products and the extent of parental yielding to demands. Boys and girls did not show particular differences in responding to television commercials. (Author/JMB)

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INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION COMMERCIALS
ON YOUNG CHILDREN

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Pamela Y. Y.
Lam

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND
USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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Denton, Texas

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the span of only a quarter-century, television has achieved a place in American homes unmatched by any other appliance, convenience, or medium of communication. According to a 1970 survey, ninety-six per cent of American homes had at least one television set (8). In many homes, the television set is turned on from morning until night. Television consumes the second largest amount of time in life, with only sleeping consuming more time than television (18). Even toddlers watch cartoons and commercials. In fact, children and teenagers are the steadiest patrons of television programs (2).

Children and Television Viewing

In the 1972 survey, Lyle and Hoffman (11) reported that the average viewing time for nursery school children had increased since 1961; the preschool children's current weekly rate in 1972 was between twenty-three and thirty-three hours per week. Gadberry (5) found that only sixteen per cent of the mothers of first grade children restricted viewing and the nature of these restrictions involved limiting violent content rather than viewing time. By age three, children may watch television on a regular basis, have

favorite programs, sing commercial jingles, and ask parents for products they see advertised on television (11). By age six, many children have been exposed to 3,000 to 4,000 hours of television; and by high school graduation, to 15,000 to 20,000 hours of television programming (20). At the present levels of advertising and violence, an average American child will have been exposed to 350,000 commercials and vicariously participated in 18,000 murders by the age of seventeen (20).

These data indicate that television is a powerful medium that is tuning into children's minds. Therefore, it is only natural that those concerned with the nation's mores and morals have begun to be concerned about the impact of television on young children.

Research on Television's Impact on Children

In recent years, social scientists, child psychologists and pediatricians, as well as educators, have begun a serious study of the impact of television on the young (20). Unfortunately, the overwhelming body of evidence, drawn from more than 2,300 studies and reports, was decidedly negative. Most of the studies not only reported that television is not beneficial to children, but that it could adversely affect children in all areas of development (20).

Physical Development

Although little definitive research has been done in the area of the effects of television viewing on physical development, it seems that such extensive, physically passive viewing could affect both the general physical development and nutritional health of growing children as well as their vision (2). After all, the time spent watching television is taken from the time that a young child would otherwise play and physically exert himself. According to Eleanore E. Maccoby (12), as long ago as 1951, in the early days of television, approximately one and a half hours a day was shifted from active play to passive viewing of television.

Intellectual Development

Although today's children are better informed from viewing television, the national average scores on certain tests, such as the SAT, have declined in the past twenty years (2). According to Director Sam McCandless of the College Entrance Examination Board, the reason for the drop in test scores is the decline in students' developed reasoning ability (10). Stern (17) reported that habitual television viewing can add to a child's vocabulary and store of general information, but it appears to decrease a child's ability to think creatively. Obviously, children are spending more time watching television and less time

reading and conversing intelligently (9). Hence, it is not uncommon to find a negative correlation between the amount of television viewing and school grades (15).

Social Development

For the majority of American children, television has become the principal socializing agent. Television shapes children's views of how the world is and what roles they should play in it (20). Television can stimulate fantasies, which, in turn, may lead to creative and imaginative expression by youngsters. However, the danger is when children retreat from real-life encounters into excessive television fantasy in order to avoid facing problems of reality. As Grossman reported, "All that we have to do is to sit passively in front of the screen which lives, thinks, sees, and hears for us and gives us the proper conclusion" (7, p. 52).

In relation to the socializing effect of television on children, the question of the impact of television violence on children has been one of the most widely studied and discussed aspects of television. In 1969, Senator John O. Pastore (13) sponsored a three-year study dealing with the impact of televised violence on children. In 1972, the Social Research Group at George Washington University completed an extensive study on all aspects of research in children's television. From the study, the data indicated that:

. . . a modest relationship exists between the viewing of violence and aggressive behavior. The correlational evidence from surveys is amenable to either of two interpretations: the viewing of violence causes aggressive behavior, or that both the viewing and the aggression are joint products of some other common source . . . (16, p. 13).

To date, television has become the most visible and omnipresent scapegoat for encouraging violence among children and young people.

Background of the Problem

Until most recently, most research concerning the effects of television on young children has dealt with the violence, horrors and killings which are continually being broadcast across the airwaves. Initially, violence and horrors were the only values with which researchers were concerned. However, researchers have begun to turn their attention to the influence of television commercials on children. Research has indicated that children are exposed to more than 25,000 television commercials a year (3). Barcus (1) concluded that one out of every five hours of a child's television viewing is spent watching commercial messages designed to influence his/her consumer behavior. Choate (4) estimated that the moderate-television-viewing child observes over 5,000 commercials for edibles per year. Munn (14) found that almost all children in his study were influenced by television advertising and that parents were

influenced by their children. Another study by Galst and White (6) found that the purchase-influencing attempts at the supermarket were related to the reinforcement value of television commercials and to the amount of television to which children were exposed at home. Surprisingly, this important area of television advertising on children has received little attention in developmental research, even though it has frequently been researched by television critics.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to investigate the effect of television advertising on young children.

The purposes of this study were fivefold:

1. To compare the extent of children's demand for advertised products with the extent of parental yielding,
2. To compare the extent of demand for advertised products with the length of their exposure time to television programs and commercials,
3. To investigate children's viewing preferences of television commercials,
4. To investigate which kinds of mothers yielded most often to their children's demands for television-advertised products, and
5. To investigate if children who had knowledge about the real intent of commercials would request fewer advertised

products than those children who did not have such knowledge.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, television advertising is defined as all purchase-demanding commercials shown on television, regardless of whether they are directed to adults or to children.

Children's demand for advertised product is defined as the number of oral or action requests of the children for the products they see advertised on television commercials. The products in requests are limited to cereals and toys.

Parental yielding used in this study means that the parents buy the demanded products for their children.

Viewing preference applies to the television commercials to which children respond as their favorite commercial in the questionnaire.

The different kinds of mothers are categorized according to the responses the mothers give to the question, "Do you ever discuss with your child about the real intent of commercials or teach him/her how to decide which ads are true and which are misleading?"

Methodology

A questionnaire designed with closed and open-ended questions was administered to forty-four children between

the ages of four years, seven months to seven years, nine months. Another questionnaire was sent home to the children's mothers to answer, to compare the child's response and the mother's response. To test the hypotheses, the resulting data were then analyzed, using the percentage method.

Hypotheses

In this study, it was assumed that:

1. The more often children demanded a product, the more often parents usually purchased it.
2. The more television a child was exposed to, the more often he/she would ask for the product advertised on television.
3. Children paid more attention to those advertised products that were related to them personally in some way and tended to neglect or dislike those products that were not related to them.
4. The mothers who spent time discussing facts about television commercials with their children and who were more concerned about their children's health and well-being would buy the products their children requested less often.
5. Children who discussed the real facts of commercials with their mothers requested advertised products less often than children whose mothers did not discuss the real facts of commercials with their children.

Significance of the Problem

The controversy of the influence of television advertising on children has increased. Therefore, the need for more controlled and systematic research has been underscored. Ward and Mackman (19) commented that children's influence on purchase and parental yielding may be related to the general patterns of parent-child interaction. As yet, no empirical evidence has been found on this issue. Hence, further research in this area is needed.

As an often-discussed medium, television has generated considerable empirical data about its influence on children relating to the learning and child development theories. In summary, television in the lives of children is complex.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Television has become the master of the living room, as well as the most important contributor to children's education. According to a recent issue of Nielsen Newscast, 68.5 million households, or slightly over ninety-seven per cent of all homes in the United States, own a television set; and 28.4 million of this group have at least two television sets (20). Since television has become such a powerful medium influencing the development of a child, extensive research has been done in this area. A review of the literature for the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior yielded reports of hundreds of empirical investigations dealing with television's impact on children (2). The studies include research done in different areas, such as television violence on children, television influence on social and emotional development of children, television commercial influence on families, effects of television teaching versus classroom teaching, television influence on the change of family eating habits, and other topics related to television and children.

Television appeals to small children more than any other media. Movies, books and magazines are not as readily accessible to the young child as a television set. Television viewing is a low cost family entertainment, and even a toddler can learn to manipulate the knob to turn on the television set. Stein and Friedrich (21) estimated that during one week, over one-third of the nursery school children's hours are devoted to television.

Recently, a number of researchers and writers have begun to examine the possible harmful influence of television advertising on young children (19). The subject of advertising and children has become a growing interest to communication researchers, which is evident from the number of articles concerned with this topic in the professional communication journals (10). In fact, television commercials represent a significant portion of children's television programming. Up to sixteen minutes per hour, or more than twenty-five per cent of some television programs for children, are devoted to commercially-sponsored messages (3). Television has become the chief promotional vehicle which advertisers have traditionally used to reach child audiences. In 1970, marketers spent seventy-five million dollars on network sponsorship of television programs for children (22). Looney (13) estimated that an average child is exposed to more than 350,000 commercial messages before he graduates from high school.

Television has swept the nation and become the most powerful and popular communication medium. In order to persuade consumers to purchase their products, the food makers spend about four billion dollars on advertising each year; and over half of this sum, 2.58 billion dollars, is spent on TV commercials (8). Ward, Levinson and Wackman (23) analyzed the kinds of advertising to which five-year-old to twelve-year-old children were exposed during a week of television viewing. The investigators reported that advertising for food products and toys accounts for more than fifty per cent of the commercials that appear during programs for the youngest children. These messages are often directed at women, who do most of the grocery shopping, and children, who are the most susceptible to advertising. Therefore, advertisers are charged with using children as surrogate salesmen to pressure their parents into buying the products.

Research on Children's Demand of Advertised Product

In 1975, Galst and White (11) conducted a study of children's reactions to televised food advertising. The purpose of the study was to compare the behavioral data between the children's attentiveness to television commercials and their requests for products. A total sample of forty-one children, twenty girls and twenty-one boys, ranging in age from three years, eleven months to five years, eleven months, were used with their mothers in the study. The

children's attentiveness to television commercials was observed by videotaping the children's television-watching behavior in a special room and analyzing the results from the recorded videotape. The demand for product requests was measured by the number of purchase-influence attempts made by the children in the supermarket session. Purchase-influence attempts were determined by accompanying each child and mother to the supermarket to shop on one occasion. The purchase-influence attempt was defined as "the child's attempt to influence purchases by making an independent request for an item--by asking, pointing, putting it in the shopping basket, or grabbing--buying an item with his or her own money, or making a decision when given a choice by the parent" (11, p. 1091). The number and ways of purchase-influence attempts were then recorded. The results of the study indicated that:

1. The children exhibited an average of one purchase-influence attempt for every two minutes in the store, and children were successful in forty-five per cent of their purchase-influence attempts.

2. Older children did attempt to influence more of their mothers' purchases at the supermarket.

3. Those children who watched more commercial television at home made more purchase demands at the supermarket.

Another study to test the impact of children's responsiveness to commercials was conducted by Robertson and Rossiter (17). The sample was comprised of ninety-two first graders, one hundred and one third graders, and ninety-six fifth graders. The sample was selected from five Philadelphia area Catholic schools, with children from upper-lower to upper-middle class families. The results of the research indicated that:

1. Greater television exposure was associated with higher request levels for advertised products.
2. The age of the child was negatively related to requests for advertised products. The older children were more aware of advertising's persuasive intent.
3. Parental education was negatively associated with requests for advertised products. Children from high parental homes had a further "reality check" and perhaps greater direct parental guidance, thus reducing their demands for advertised products.

The focus of the Ward and Wackman (25) study was on the influence of television advertising on aspects of mother-child interaction, children's attempts to influence mothers' purchases, and mothers yielding to these attempts. The variables used to ascertain the influence of television advertising were:

1. The age of the child, the number of children in the family and the family's social class,

2. The parent-child conflict and restrictions on viewing, and

3. The time mother spent on television, mother's recall of commercials, and mother's attitude toward advertising.

Self-administered questionnaires were filled out by one hundred nine mothers. The sample consisted of forty-three children from five to seven years of age, thirty-two children from eight to ten years of age, and thirty-four children from eleven to twelve years of age. Each mother was asked to indicate the frequency of her child's demand for a list of twenty-two products that were often advertised on television. In addition, the mothers were asked to indicate the frequency of commercial influence on their child's demand for a product and how often they usually gave in to their child's demand (25). The findings of this study revealed that mothers felt that commercials influenced younger children more than the older children, as indicated by the frequency of requests for a particular product. On the other hand, even though the older child requested less frequently, the parents tended to yield more often to the demands of the older child; Ward and Wackman attributed this result to the mother's confidence in the older child's competence in making purchase decisions. Furthermore, aspects of parent-child conflict were related to the influence attempts and parental yielding. The data suggested that

mothers who restricted television viewing were not apt to yield to purchase-influence attempts as much as the parents who did not restrict any television viewing. Mother's time spent watching television with her children was positively related to influence attempts, yielding, and perceived influence. The study also indicated that mothers with positive attitudes toward television advertising were more likely than mothers with negative attitudes to yield to purchase-influence attempts (25).

The findings of the Ward and Wackman (25) study indicated that intrafamily interaction was another predictor of the effect of television commercials on children. Parental yielding and children's influence attempts may also be related to the general patterns of parent-child interaction.

Techniques Used in Television Advertising

To catch young children's attention, several different kinds of persuasive appeals and stylistic modes are employed in children's advertising. Slogans or jingles are used to sell the product in more than two-fifths of the ads (1). By age three, the children can sing most of the jingles in television commercials (14). According to Florence Brumbaugh,

Many adults laugh indulgently when children sing the commercial jingles they have heard or repeat the slogans of advertisers and give little thought to the effect of advertising upon children unless they are annoyed by their requests to purchase useless or inferior products . . . (4, p. 20).

Another closely related technique was repetition, when the brand name was verbalized a number of times during the commercial (1). It was also realized that children were being used widely to act in commercials designed to attract other children and to make them salesmen in their homes (6). The research indicated that children were more attractive and persuasive than adults in introducing advertising products (19).

Considering all the techniques of television advertising, parents feel most vulnerable to the techniques of the premium offer, such as free coupons, free toys or discount prices, because it causes the greatest influence on the children. In 1974, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued a guideline for commercials aimed at children under twelve that suggested that television advertisers refrain from using premium offers. The guide stated that:

The advertiser should not promote a product or service by referring to an offer of a premium, such as, prize, toy, game or other promotional device having significant appeal for children under twelve years of age and unrelated to the merits of the product or service being promoted (16, p. 31).

In documenting the potentially harmful effects that televised premium advertising can have on youngsters, the FTC report disclosed that the purposes of the premium ads were focused most often on other factors rather than the principal products; and this purpose would greatly increase

the likelihood of the child's confusion about the advertised products (15).

After six months of speculation, the FTC officially rejected its proposed ban on television advertising of premiums to children. In its "Statement of Reasons for Rejecting the Proposed Guide on TV Advertising Premiums to Children," the FTC conceded that:

The scientific literature about children's perceptions of television ads tend to support the conclusions that young children:

- 1) fail to understand the nature and profit-making purpose of television commercials,
- 2) tend to trust and believe television advertising indiscriminately,
- 3) tend to recall only simple, concrete elements of commercials,
- 4) have difficulty distinguishing commercials from programs, and
- 5) tend to want whatever products are advertised on television (12, p. 7).

In a speech given by Mary Gardiner Jones of the FTC, she expressed the thought that most of the mothers accepted and welcomed commercials that "teach" children, such as good hygiene and good eating habits. On the other hand, most of the complaints from the mothers were centered around manipulation of the child by the advertising messages, misrepresentations of the products, and the pressures imposed on the mothers by the children's demands for the products seen on the television commercials (24).

Research on Television Advertising's Impact on Children

In researching the impact of advertising on children's behavior, Brumbaugh (4) studied four hundred children

between the ages of six and twelve. The results of the study revealed two important trends. First, the children were found to have excellent recall of products advertised on television, most of which were not for children's consumption; for example, detergent, beer, cigarettes, cereal, drugs, cosmetics, and automobiles. Second, children could state logical and factual reasons for both liking and disliking commercials.

In examining the attitudes of adolescents toward television advertising, Ward and Robertson (24) discovered that there were some relationships between social class and amount of television exposure and the related attitudes of the adolescents toward the television commercial. The results indicated that the lower-class adolescents had more positive attitudes toward commercials than the middle-class and upper-class adolescents. Middle-class and upper-class adolescents who were highly exposed to television had a more positive attitude toward commercials than adolescents who were less exposed to television. In addition, the study revealed that discussions of consumption matters in the family, mutual advice concerning such matters, were related to positive attitudes toward advertising.

The advertisements rarely use comparative message strategies or suggest that the child ask the parents to purchase the products. Instead, advertisements use powerful

and persuasive tactics to attract the young children, so that they would pressure their parents to buy the things they see on television. Many parents who did not yield to the requests of their children would have to face the difficulty of explaining the real intent of the television commercials to the children (8).

Various researchers have pointed to the poor eating habits encouraged by television advertisements, and some have even linked the children's exposure to advertisement of drugs and patent medicines to their drug abuse in later life (9, 10, 11, 18, 22). The effects of poor nutrition are especially critical during the early years of a child's development. Food habits, implanted from the age of three years or earlier, have visible effects by the time the child reaches adolescence and later adulthood. The earlier poor eating habits are formed, the more difficult they are to break (18).

Food technology has improved immensely since World War II. The food advertisers have sought to increase sales of convenience and fun foods through the television medium. As a result, the TV dinner has become a common family meal (7). More than half of the television commercials aimed at children are for edibles which are promoted on the basis of their sugared, sweetened or crispy qualities. The children are exposed to these commercials repeatedly, and eventually

they can develop unhealthy food habits. "The 5,000 food commercials seen by a moderate television-watching child in a year are a lesson in bad nutrition" (7, p. 11). Some parents who do care about what their children eat find that they must constantly fight to get their children to eat the proper food they need. Meanwhile, the children continually press their parents to buy the edibles that they see on television (7). In the Galst and White (11) study, the results indicated that on the average the children try to get an item of their choice into the shopping cart every two minutes and succeed in buying them about forty-five per cent of the time. Their study of forty-one preschoolers concerning food purchases revealed that the more television a child watches, the less conscious of nutrition and the less skeptical of advertisers' claims the child is. Therefore, the researchers concluded that the heaviest television viewers tend to have the worst diets (9).

Summary

Questions about the effects of television advertising on children have been raised by television's critics frequently, but little published research exists in this area. Most of the current research on the effects of television advertising has been focused on adults rather than on children. Generalizations about the effects of television advertising on children simply cannot be derived from

research with adults. Hence, a need exists to study the effects television advertising has on children.

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CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING THE STUDY

This study investigated the children's viewing preference of television commercials and the extent to which the television advertising influenced the young children.

Selection of the Sample

Fifty-six children, including thirty-four girls and twenty-two boys, participated in the study. Forty-four children, including sixteen boys and twenty-eight girls, were used for the data analysis because seven mothers did not return the questionnaire. Five other children were excluded from the sample because their older siblings also participated in the study; and under this condition, the younger siblings had to be excluded from the analysis of the data. Only one child was included in the study from each family. The age of the children ranged from four years, seven months to seven years, nine months. The age range of the children is listed in Table I. All the children were Caucasian except one black male child. The children lived in Denton, Texas, during the time of the testing. They were enrolled in private day care centers and nursery schools, as well as in private and public elementary schools.

TABLE I
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE CHILDREN IN THE STUDY

Age Range	Boys (N)	Girls (N)	Total (N)
Four years, seven months to five years, zero months	7	6	13
Five years, one month to five years, six months	3	4	7
Five years, seven months to six years, zero months	0	7	7
Six years, one month to six years, six months	3	2	5
Six years, seven months to seven years, zero months	1	5	6
Seven years, one month to seven years, six months	1	2	3
Seven years, seven months +	1	2	3
Total	16	28	44

N=Number

The directors of three day care centers and one nursery school were contacted initially by telephone to explain the purpose of the study. Oral permission to use the children in their centers was granted. Then a parent permission request form was sent home through the centers for every child who ranged within four and one-half years old to seven years old. The letter included the request for permission to use their children in the study, as well as the cooperation

of the mothers to answer the questionnaires which their children would bring home. A copy of the parent permission slip is shown in Appendix I. Sixty parent permission slips were sent home; and forty-one, which was sixty-eight per cent of the total, were returned.

Fifteen children in the sample were recruited individually by telephone contacts with their mothers. All these children fitted the described criteria for sample selection.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire was devised for the children, to gain information regarding their television viewing habits, their attitudes toward television commercials, the demand for their mothers to buy cereals and toys, and their interpretation of the reality of commercials. The children's questionnaire is shown in Appendix II. The questionnaire was pretested in the Stoneleigh Learning Center, Denton, Texas, during June, 1977, with three boys and three girls ranging in age from five years to seven years old. The children understood the questionnaire very clearly. Minor corrections were made in the questionnaire after the pretest.

A second questionnaire was devised for the mothers pertaining to information about their children's television viewing habits, their attitudes toward commercials directed at children, and their reactions to children's demands for

advertised products. A copy of the mother's questionnaire is shown in Appendix III. The mother's questionnaire was pretested in June, 1977, using the mothers of the children pretested in the Stoneleigh Learning Center. The mother's questionnaire did not require any revision.

The formal testing was done from November 8, 1977, through November 18, 1977. Forty-one children were interviewed individually in the day care centers or in the nursery schools which they attended. All the mothers' questionnaires were sent home through the centers, with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Another fifteen children were interviewed in their homes or in their parents' offices. For this group of mothers, the questionnaires were handed individually to them with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Interviewing Process

Forty-one children were interviewed individually in three day care centers and in one nursery school in Denton, Texas. In every center, a private room was arranged for the researcher and the child so that the testing could be given without interference. Before the researcher arrived, the child was told by the teacher that someone would ask him/her a few questions concerning television.

During the interview, the child was placed in a comfortable, child-sized chair next to the researcher. The researcher asked the child his/her name and recorded it on

the first page of the child's questionnaire. The researcher explained to the child that some questions would be asked about television commercials. The child was asked whether he/she knew what television commercials were. If the child did not know the term "television commercials," an explanation was given to the child until he/she understood the meaning of television commercials. Each question was read to the child by the researcher, and the responses were recorded on the questionnaire by the researcher.

An additional twelve children were interviewed in their homes. The children and the researcher were left alone in the living or dining room. The questionnaire was given to each child in a manner similar to the way it was done in the centers. In addition, three more children were interviewed on the campus of North Texas State University. In all the interview settings, the child and the researcher were left alone. Each interview was conducted in a similar manner for approximately twenty minutes.

Analysis of the Data

The data was compiled from the forty-four children's questionnaires, including twenty-eight girls and sixteen boys, and forty-four mothers' questionnaires. The responses were totaled, and percentages were derived to compare to the hypotheses. The findings are analyzed and interpreted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

REPORTING AND ANALYZING THE DATA

Television has generated a considerable amount of influence on children and adults. Television commercials have influenced the children's demands for products and have caused problems for the parents. This study is concerned with the influence of television commercials on children's preference for cereals and toys, as well as the children's influence on family purchasing.

Parental Yielding to Children's Demand for Advertised Products on Television

The first hypothesis states that the more often children demand a product, the more often parents yield and purchase the product. From the total number of responses of the forty-four children, nine per cent indicated that they never asked their parents for any toys advertised on television. In contrast, the parents responded that all the children asked for advertised toys. Demand for cereals did not vary greatly between the mother's and the child's answers. The greatest percentage of demand for toys and cereals fell in the "sometimes" category. The different responses of the mothers and the children are shown in

Table II and Table III. This study revealed that the mothers' and children's responses to the demand for toys and cereals are almost equal. However, a conspicuous discrepancy was found between the mothers' and children's responses to demand for toys.

The extent of parental yielding to advertised products in this study is shown in Table IV. Fifty-five per cent of the mothers reported they only yielded sometimes; and almost one-third of the mothers, or thirty-six per cent of the total, never or very seldom yielded to the demands of their children. However, seven per cent of the total mothers yielded to the children's demands most of the time. In comparing Table III and Table IV for the mothers' responses concerning the extent of children's demands for toys and cereals versus the extent of parental yielding, the results revealed that there was no sex differences in demand for advertised products, nor was there any sex differences in the extent of parental yielding to the product demands by the children.

The study revealed that approximately twenty-one per cent of the children always asked for advertised products, but only nine per cent of the mothers always yielded to the children's demands for the products. This result contradicts the hypothesis that the more children demand the products, the more parents yield and purchase the products.

TABLE II
CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO THE EXTENT OF DEMAND FOR TOYS AND CEREALS

Demand Responses by Children	Cereals						Toys					
	Boys		Girls		Total		Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Always Demand	5	31	6	22	11	25	5	31	5	18	10	23
Sometimes Demand	9	56	17	61	26	59	9	56	21	75	30	68
Never Demand	2	13	5	18	7	16	2	13	2	7	4	9
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

TABLE III
MOTHER'S RESPONSES TO THE EXTENT OF CHILDREN'S
DEMAND FOR TOYS AND CEREALS

Responses of Children's Demand Reported by Mother	Cereals						Toys					
	Boys		Girls		Total		Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Always Demand	1	6	7	25	8	18	3	19	7	25	10	23
Sometimes Demand	14	88	19	68	33	75	13	81	21	75	34	77
Never Demand	1	6	2	7	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

TABLE IV
EXTENT OF PARENTAL YIELDING TO CHILDREN'S
DEMAND FOR PRODUCTS ADVERTISED

Extent of Parental Yielding	Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Most of the Time	2	13	2	7	4	9
Sometimes	9	56	15	54	24	55
Very Seldom	4	25	7	25	11	25
Never	1	6	4	14	5	11
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

Furthermore, the study also revealed that approximately seventy-six per cent of the children sometimes asked for advertised products, but only fifty-five per cent of mothers yielded sometimes to the children's demands. Overall, about ninety-seven per cent of children asked for television-advertised products, while only sixty-four per cent of the parents either "always" or "sometimes" bought the products.

Amount of Television Exposure for Children

The second hypothesis in this study states that the more television a child watches, the more often he/she asks for the products advertised on television. In the study,

the mothers were asked to indicate the number of hours their children usually watched television every Saturday morning. The results, shown in Table V, indicate that fifty-nine per cent of the children watched one and one-half to two hours of television on Saturday morning; and only seven per cent of the children watched more than three and one-half hours.

TABLE V

LENGTH OF TIME CHILDREN SPENT ON TELEVISION
VIEWING ON SATURDAY MORNING

Number of Viewing Hours	Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0 - 1 Hour	1	6	6	21	7	16
1½ - 2 Hours	8	50	18	64	26	59
2½ - 3 Hours	5	31	3	11	8	18
3½ or More Hours	2	13	1	4	3	7
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

The mothers were then asked to indicate whether they restricted their children's viewing time, and the results are shown in Table VI. The study revealed that forty-eight per cent of the children have unlimited viewing time, while

TABLE VI
LENGTH OF TIME CHILDREN SPENT ON TELEVISION
VIEWING ON AVERAGE

Number of Viewing Hours Per Week	Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0 - 7 Hours	2	13	7	25	9	20
8 - 14 Hours	5	31	5	18	10	23
15 - 21 Hours	1	6	3	11	4	9
Unlimited Time	8	50	13	46	21	48
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

forty-three per cent of the children watched television for less than fourteen hours per week. No sex differences in the length of television exposure is found in this group of children.

In the study, the results of Table VI are compared to Table III to test whether the amount of television exposure affects the extent of children's demands for television-advertised products. The results show that even though forty-eight per cent of the children are exposed to an unlimited time of television viewing, only twenty-one per cent of the children always asked for products advertised, and

seventy-six per cent of the children sometimes asked for the products. The results do not support the second hypothesis that the longer period of television exposure increases the children's demands for an advertised product. However, the results do not indicate a contradiction.

Children's Preference for Television Commercials

The third hypothesis states that the children pay more attention to the advertised products that are related to them in some way, and they neglect or dislike the commercials that are not related to them. During the interviews, all the children were asked, "Which commercial do you dislike most?" Almost all the children answered definitely which commercial they liked and which ones they particularly disliked. The commercials are categorized and illustrated in Table VII and Table VIII.

The greatest percentage of the boys' preferences fell in the categories of toys (sixty-two per cent), food (thirteen per cent), and cars (thirteen per cent), while girls tended to choose toys (thirty-nine per cent), cereals (fourteen per cent), food (twelve per cent), and dolls (twelve per cent) as their favorite commercials. Other categories, such as shopping centers, medicine, toiletries, or household necessities, were among the least favorite of the children. From the study, the results indicated that boys showed a limited choice in the category of commercials

TABLE VII
CHILDREN'S PREFERENCE ON TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

Commercial Category	Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>Commercials Children Like</u>						
Toys	10	62	11	39	21	49
Dolls	0	0	3	12	3	7
Cereals	1	6	4	14	5	11
Food	2	13	3	12	5	11
Cars	2	13	2	8	4	9
Toiletries or Household Necessities	0	0	1	3	1	2
Shopping Centers	0	0	1	3	1	2
Pet Food	0	0	1	3	1	2
Medicine	0	0	1	3	1	2
Movies (Previews)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beer	0	0	0	0	0	0
I Don't Know/ Cannot Decide	1	6	1	3	2	5
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

TABLE VIII
CHILDREN'S DISLIKE OF TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

Commercial Category	Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<u>Commercials Children Dislike</u>						
Toys	0	0	1	3	1	2
Dolls	1	6	1	3	2	5
Cereals	0	0	0	0	0	0
Food	3	19	2	8	5	11
Cars	1	6	5	18	6	13
Toiletries or Household Necessities	6	37	5	18	11	25
Shopping Centers	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pet Food	0	0	1	3	1	2
Medicine	0	0	2	8	2	5
Movies (Previews)	2	13	1	3	3	7
Beer	1	6	2	8	3	7
I Don't Know/ Cannot Decide	2	13	8	28	10	23
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

they liked or disliked, while girls tended to be broader in their choices of commercials. The toy commercials were the most liked commercials for both sexes. None of the children mentioned beer or movie previews as their favorite commercials. The overall preferences of the children were concentrated on toys (forty-nine per cent), cereals (eleven per cent), and food (eleven per cent). Thus, the analysis of the data indicated that the hypothesis is correct in assuming that the children pay more attention to those advertised products that are related to them in some way.

In testing for the second part of the hypothesis, the girls and boys were asked to name the commercials they disliked. The disliked commercials were then categorized and listed in Table VIII. Thirty-seven per cent of the boys showed their dislike of commercials on the toiletries and household necessities, while thirty-six per cent of the girls showed their dislike of commercials on toiletries and household necessities as well as car commercials. Only five per cent of the children indicated their dislike for the doll commercials, two per cent indicated their dislike for toy commercials, and none indicated a dislike for cereal commercials. The shopping centers commercials were not mentioned as disliked by either sexes. Thus, the results support the hypothesis that the children show their dislike for types of commercials that are not related to them, such as toiletries and household necessities.

The interviewed children could select their favorite commercials and their least favorite commercials. However, some of the children seemed to be puzzled by the question and could not decide on their least favorite commercials, but they could indicate their preferences. Twenty-three per cent of the children responded that they did not know what commercials they disliked, but only five per cent responded that they did not know what they liked.

Parental Discussion of the Real Intent of Television Commercials

The fourth hypothesis in this study states that mothers who spend time discussing facts about television commercials with their children and who are more concerned about their children's health and well-being less often purchase their children's requested products. In the mothers' questionnaire, a question was asked regarding whether they ever talked with their children about the "contents of the commercials" or the "selling techniques" of the television commercials. The purpose of these questions was to investigate whether these concerned mothers would yield more or less to the children's demands for the advertised product. In the interviews, the children were questioned, "How often can you get your parents to buy the things you see on TV commercials?" The two responses from the questions are compared in Table IX. The extent of parental yielding was determined

TABLE IX

EXTENT OF PARENTAL DISCUSSION OF REAL INTENT OF COMMERCIALS
VERSUS EXTENT OF PARENTAL YIELDING TO CHILDREN'S
DEMANDS FOR TELEVISION ADVERTISED PRODUCTS

Extent of Parental Yielding	Parents Who Discuss TV Commercials		Parents Who Do Not Dis- cuss TV Commercials		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Always Yield	2	9	2	9	4	9
Sometimes Yield	10	46	14	64	24	55
Very Seldom Yield	6	27	5	23	11	25
Never Yield	4	18	1	4	5	11
Totals	22	100	22	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

by the mothers' responses to how often she purchased the advertised products in fulfillment of the children's demands for the products.

The responses revealed that nine per cent of the total mothers would yield always, fifty-five per cent of the total mothers would yield sometimes, twenty-five per cent of the total mothers would yield very seldom, and eleven per cent of the total mothers would never yield to the children's demands for the products. In the study, the data revealed

that approximately forty-six per cent of the mothers who discussed the intent of the commercials with their children yielded sometimes to the children's demands, while sixty-four per cent of the mothers who did not discuss the intent of the commercials with their children yielded sometimes. The results also indicated that eighteen per cent of the mothers who discussed commercials with their children never yielded to the children's demands, but only four per cent of the parents who did not discuss commercials never yielded. When the two groups of parents were compared in the study, the results showed that parents who did not discuss the real intent of television commercials with the children yielded more often to the children's demands than parents who did otherwise.

One of the interesting results of this study is that there was an equal number of mothers who discussed the real intent of commercials with their children as compared to mothers who did not discuss the commercials with their children. All the present results support the hypothesis that parental discussion of television commercials results in a lesser extent of parental yielding for the demand for products.

In further analyzing the data, the question concerning the mothers' discussion of nutritional values with children indicated that fifty-five per cent of the total mothers in

the study did not discuss the nutritional values in the family. Only forty-five per cent of the mothers explained the nutritional values to their children. The results are shown in Table X.

TABLE X
PARENTAL DISCUSSION OF NUTRITIONAL VALUE IN FAMILY

Responses of Parents	Boys		Girls		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	7	44	13	46	20	45
No	9	56	15	54	24	55
Totals	16	100	28	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

The last hypothesis for this study states that children who discuss the real facts of commercials with their mothers request advertised products less often than children whose mothers do not discuss the real facts of commercials with their children. To test for this hypothesis, the mothers were asked, "How often does your child ask for certain cereals that he/she sees on TV?" The responses from this question were correlated with the responses from the question regarding parental discussion of the real intent of television commercials, and the results are illustrated in

Table XI. The data revealed that eighteen per cent of the children in the study always demanded the advertised products, seventy-five per cent of the children sometimes demanded, and seven per cent of the children never demanded the advertised products. In the group of mothers who discussed the real intent of commercials, twenty-three per cent of their children always demanded and only nine per cent of their children never demanded. In the group of mothers who did not discuss television commercials with their children,

TABLE XI

EXTENT OF PARENTAL DISCUSSION OF REAL INTENT
OF TELEVISION COMMERCIALS VERSUS EXTENT
OF CHILDREN'S DEMAND FOR TELEVISION
ADVERTISED PRODUCTS

Extent of Children's De- mand for TV Advertised Products	Parents Who Discuss TV Commercials		Parents Who Do Not Dis- cuss TV Commercials		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Always Demand	5	23	3	14	8	18
Sometimes Demand	15	68	18	82	33	75
Never Demand	2	9	1	4	3	7
Totals	22	100	22	100	44	100

N=Number

%=Percentage of the total number of responses

Every percentage is rounded off to the nearest whole number

fourteen per cent of the children always asked, while eighty-two per cent of the children sometimes asked. Overall, ninety-one per cent of the children whose mothers discussed the real intent of the commercials asked for the products, either always or sometimes; but for the other group of mothers, ninety-six per cent of their children asked for the advertised products. However, the data revealed a trend to support the hypothesis that children whose parents discussed the real intent of commercials requested the advertised products less often.

Discussion of the Chapter

In analyzing the children's responses to the interview and their mothers' responses to the questionnaire, a greater understanding of the influence of television commercials on children was possible. The study revealed information on the extent of children's demands for television-advertised products, the extent of parental yielding to the children's demands, the children's viewing preferences of television commercials, and the importance of parental discussion of the real intent of television commercials.

The results in the study showed that there were no sex differences in the influence of television commercials on children. Parents did not particularly yield more according to the demands of their children for the advertised products.

From the study, a trend emerged indicating that the parents usually yielded less often than their children demanded.

The analysis of data revealed that almost half of the total families in the study did not restrict the children to the amount of television viewing time. The demands of the children were affected by the extent of the television viewing even though the effect was very limited.

Children were found to have specific preferences regarding types of television commercials. The children's preferences were usually related to objects of their interests. Even though most of the children could name their preferred television commercials during the interview, there were some children who could not decide which commercials they did not like. The choice was more difficult to make on dislikes than on preferences.

Parental discussion about the real intent of television commercials was found to be important. In the parents' opinion, such discussion lessened the extent of the children's demands for the advertised products. The findings of the study also emphasized that parental discussion influenced the extent of parental yielding of the children's demands for television-advertised products. Parental yielding occurred less often by parents who chose to discuss the commercial intent with their children.

Among the five hypotheses in the study, only two of the hypotheses are supported by the resulting data. The

results indicated that further investigation of the other three hypotheses is needed. Further research with a larger sample may help to thoroughly investigate the hypotheses.

The hypothesis that the more children demand for an advertised product the more the parents yield and purchase the product is normal to most people. However, the study contradicted this hypothesis. Further research is needed for the purpose of examining this hypothesis.

During the interviews with the children, all the questions were completed when asked. However, some of the young children, less than five years of age, had problems with a short attention span during the interview. In addition, some of these younger children had difficulty in distinguishing the programs from the commercials. The children's questionnaire may be too long for a child of five years old or younger. In the study, the children above six years old gave meaningful and logical responses. Hence, the replication of this study could enhance shortening of the children's questionnaire or choosing older children for the sample for the study.

In conclusion, the purposes of the study were fulfilled. Television commercials do occupy much of the children's time; and this study shows that the purchasing behavior of both children and parents is affected by the television commercials.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The problem of this study was to investigate the effects of television advertising on young children. Particular attention was given to the areas of children's viewing preferences for television commercials, the extent of children's demands for advertised products, the amount of parental yielding, and the influence of parental discussion with the children on the real intent of television commercials.

Interviews were conducted with forty-four boys and girls between the ages of four years, seven months and seven years, nine months. These children lived in Denton County and were enrolled in public schools, private schools, day care centers, and nursery schools in Denton, Texas. A questionnaire was devised which requested information regarding children's television viewing habits, their attitudes toward television commercials, the demands for their mothers to buy cereals and toys, and an interpretation of the reality of commercials. The questionnaire was completed through individual interviews.

A second questionnaire was devised for the mothers pertaining to the information about their children's television viewing habits, their attitudes toward commercials, and their reactions to the children's demands for advertised products.

The data obtained from both the children's interview and the mothers' questionnaire yielded information about the influence of television commercials on the young children. The factors of television influence included the children's viewing preferences, the extent of the demands, the extent of parental yielding to the demands, and the influence of parental discussion about the real intent of television commercials.

The results of the study showed that the parents did not particularly yield according to the demands of their children for advertised products. Most of the time, mothers would yield less than the children demanded. A trend emerged indicating that the number of demands a child made for an advertised product was related to the length of time a child watched television.

In the study, children were able to name their specific preferences and dislikes for television commercials. The children found it more difficult to name their dislikes than their preferences. The majority of the children tended to prefer commercials which were related to their interests.

Parental discussion of the real intent of television commercials influenced the children. Children whose mothers discussed commercials with them made fewer demands for advertised products. The data also revealed that parents who discussed the commercial intent with their children were the parents who yielded less often to the demands of their children for advertised products. In addition, the data analysis indicated that the boys and girls did not show particular differences in responding to the television commercials.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn from this study:

1. The extent of children's demands for advertised products does not necessarily relate proportionally to the extent of parental yielding.
2. The more television a child watches, the more often he/she tends to demand advertised products.
3. Children can state their particular preferences and dislikes for television commercials even before the age of seven. They indicate a preference for commercials that are directly related to them in some way.
4. Children who understand the real facts of commercials request fewer advertised products, because they know the purposes of commercials.

5. Mothers who take time to discuss television commercials with their children often yield less to the children's demands. These mothers reason with their children regarding why they cannot get the products they demand by explaining the real facts of commercials with their children.

Recommendations

Several recommendations that might be useful for future research emerged from the results of this study.

The first recommendation is that future research on the topic of sex role stereotyping may be worth investigating. In this study, the data analysis was basically focused on the separation of responses between boys and girls. However, no significant differences were found between the two sexes. Only four children in the interviews gave responses which indicated the values of sex-role stereotyping in their choice for preference and dislike of commercials. The small sample is a limitation for this study; a larger number of subjects could be beneficial in further research. The influence of television commercials in cultivating the sex-role stereotyping values on children is an area that needs further investigation.

The second recommendation deals with the extent of educational values learned by children from the television commercials. Nowadays, more and more schools begin to

employ television as an instructional media (2). However, it appears no research has ever been done on how television commercials can affect the education of children. Children could sing commercial jingles by the age of three, and some could repeat commercials slogans at a very young age (1). Do these imply that television commercials can help to educate children in music and vocabulary? If parents make use of television commercials to teach their children about consumer education, will the children be better consumers in their future lives? How do television commercials influence different aspects of education for a child? Further research might be considered in these areas to investigate both the advantages and disadvantages of television commercials as an educational medium.

The third recommendation concerns exploring how television commercials can influence young children in their demands for toys during the special holiday seasons. Television commercials occupy a large portion of television time, especially during holiday seasons such as Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Halloween. Further research might be worthwhile in comparing differences between children's demands in ordinary times of the year and demands during special holiday seasons.

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APPENDIX I

Box 6933, N. T. Station
Denton, Texas 76203
October 27, 1977

Dear

I am writing to invite you and your children to participate in my research study for fulfillment of my Masters Degree requirements at North Texas State University. The title of my study is "Television Commercial's Influence on Children and Parents." With your permission, I would like to include your child, _____, in my research study. In addition, your cooperation is also needed in filling out a questionnaire on your opinions about television commercials. Please complete the form on the bottom part of this letter, indicating whether you agree or not to participate. I would appreciate receiving your reply at your earliest convenience. Please know your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

(Pamela Lam)

Name of Parent: _____
Name of Child: _____

My child and I () agree
() do not agree

to participate in the study conducted by Pamela Lam
in fulfillment of her requirements for the Master
Degree Program at North Texas State University.

Please return this portion at your earliest convenience.

=====

APPENDIX II

CHILDREN'S QUESTIONNAIRE

I. GENERAL INFORMATION ON TELEVISION

1. How many television sets do you have at home? _____
2. Do you often watch TV alone?
_____ Yes
_____ No
3. Who usually watches TV with you?
_____ Father
_____ Mother
_____ Brother(s) and/or sister(s)
_____ Friends
_____ Others
4. Which of the following do you prefer to do more?
_____ Watch TV
_____ Play--What type? _____
_____ Others
_____ Cannot decide

II. EXPOSURE TO TELEVISION PROGRAMS AND COMMERCIALS

1. Do you like to watch TV commercials?
_____ Yes
_____ No
_____ Sometimes

III. ATTITUDE OF CHILDREN TOWARD TELEVISION COMMERCIALS

1. Which commercial is your favorite commercial on TV?

Why? _____

2. Which commercial do you dislike most? _____

Why? _____

3. Some commercials on Saturday morning come right in the middle of the program. Are you mad when this happens?

_____ Yes
 _____ No
 _____ Sometimes
 _____ Depends

4. Do you think that TV commercials always tell the truth?

_____ Yes
 _____ No--How can you tell if they do not tell the truth?

IV. INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION COMMERCIALS ON CHILDREN'S DEMAND FOR BUYING

A. CEREAL

1. When you saw a commercial on TV selling cereal, how often do you ask your mother to buy them for you?

_____ Always ask
 _____ Sometimes ask
 _____ Never ask

2. When your mother says you cannot have the cereal, what would you do?

_____ I get mad at her.
 _____ I just remain silent
 _____ I would keep on pleading/begging for it

3. Which cereal do you like most? _____

Why? _____

B. TOYS

1. When you saw a toy commercial on television, how often do you ask for the toy?

_____ Always ask
 _____ Sometimes ask
 _____ Never ask

2. When you mother says you cannot have the toy, what would you do?

_____ I get mad at her
 _____ I just remain silent
 _____ I would keep on pleading/begging for it.

C. GENERAL

1. How often can you get your parents to buy the things you saw on TV commercials?

_____ Most of the time
 _____ Sometimes
 _____ Very seldom
 _____ Never

V. REALITY OF COMMERCIALS AS INTERPRETED BY CHILDREN

1. Do you think the cereals that are shown on commercials usually taste as good as they show on TV?

_____ Yes
 _____ No

How do you know? _____

2. In the Alpha-Bits cereal commercial, when the kids eat the alphabets "BEAR," the real bear is gone. Do you think that you can really scare the bear behind you while you are eating Alpha-Bits cereal?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

How do you know? _____

*****END OF QUESTIONNAIRE*****

APPENDIX III

MOTHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

I. DATA OF FAMILY AND CHILD'S VIEWING

1. On an average Saturday morning, about how many hours does your child watch television?

0 $\frac{1}{2}$ 1 $1\frac{1}{2}$ 2 $2\frac{1}{2}$ 3 $3\frac{1}{2}$ 4+

2. Do you ever talk with your child about the content of commercials? For instance, do you discuss the kinds of selling techniques that are used or teach (him/her) how to decide which ads are true and which are misleading?

_____ Yes--What sort of things do you or your child talk about?

_____ No _____

II. ATTITUDES TOWARD COMMERCIALS ON CHILDREN

1. Have you seen any of the commercials that are shown to children on Saturday mornings?

_____ Yes

_____ No (go to next section)

2. Is there any particular commercial that you think is good for your child to see?

_____ Yes--Which one is that? _____

_____ No Why do you say that is a good one? _____

3. Can you think of any commercial that is especially bad for your child to see?

_____ Yes--Which one is that?
 _____ No Why do you say that is a bad one?

III. MOTHER'S REACTIONS TO CEREAL COMMERCIALS AND CHILD'S DEMANDS OF THE PRODUCT

1. Many of the ads aimed at children are for breakfast cereals. How often does your child ask for certain cereals that he/she sees on TV?

_____ Always
 _____ Sometimes
 _____ Never

2. Which cereals seem to be requested the most? _____

3. Does your child usually ask for a cereal that is advertised right after watching a commercial?

_____ Yes
 _____ No
 _____ Sometimes

4. Does your child usually ask for the cereal from a TV commercial when you are at the supermarket?

_____ Yes
 _____ No
 _____ Sometimes

5. Is there other occasion or place that your child asks for the cereal?

_____ Yes--When/Where? _____
 _____ No

6. When your child asks for a specific cereal, what reasons does he/she usually give for wanting it?

Reasons: _____

7. Does your child ever mention the nutritional value of a particular kind of cereal?

_____ Yes
 _____ No

8. Does your child ever say that he/she wants a cereal so he/she can get a premium or prize in the box?

_____ Yes
 _____ No

9. Do you think that premiums in cereal boxes are a good thing or a bad thing?

_____ Good
 _____ Bad
 _____ Depends
 _____ Don't know

Why do you think that?

10. When your child asks for a certain cereal, do you ever tell him/her that (he/she) cannot have it?

_____ Yes--How does (he/she) react when you say no?
 _____ No

What kinds of reasons do you usually give him/her?

IV. MOTHER'S REACTIONS TO TOY COMMERCIALS AND CHILD'S DEMANDS FOR THE PRODUCT

1. Many of the ads aimed at children are for toys. How often does your child ask for certain toys that (he/she) sees on TV?

_____ Always
 _____ Sometimes
 _____ Never

2. When your child asks for a certain toy, do you ever tell him/her that (he/she) cannot have it?

☐ Yes--How does (he/she) react when you say no?
☐ No

V. DATA OF FAMILY

1. In terms of discipline, would you say you are a strict parent or a permissive parent?

☐ Authoritative
☐ Combination
☐ Permissive

2. (If the child has siblings)
Which child usually gets the product demanded?

☐ The oldest
☐ The youngest
☐ No particular age preference

Why? _____

3. Does your child have certain hours when he can watch TV?

☐ Yes--How many hours can he watch? _____
☐ No

4. How many members are there in the household? _____

*****END OF QUESTIONNAIRE*****

(Do not write below this line, please)

Type of Interview _____

Date of Interview _____

Time of Interview _____

Reference Number _____

Last name of child _____

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